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January 26, 1846.

GEORGE PETRIE, Esq., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The Rev. Samuel Butcher, F.T.C.D., read the first part of a paper by the Rev. Dr. Hincks, on Hieroglyphics.

This paper commences with a review of the progress made in Egyptian learning, from the first discoveries of Drs. Young and Champollion to the present day. It was alleged, that very little progress had been made since the death of Champollion, the only point established since that event being the principle of peculiar letters and their complements, discovered by Dr. Lepsius. The causes of the want of progress since this discovery were affirmed to be two: 1st, ignorance of another principle, in some measure antagonistic to this, which was extensively applied in Egyptian writing; and, 2nd, an erroneous mode of investigating the phonetic powers of the letters. This consideration was postponed till the second part of the paper: the third part to contain the results, as far as yet known, of an investigation into the powers of the letters, conducted in the manner that would be shewn, in the second part, to be most likely to lead to the truth.

The present part was devoted to the establishment of the new principle above referred to. The principle is this: "the phonoglyphs which compose the proper Egyptian alphabet had *names*, which consisted of *themselves with the addition of certain expletive characters*: and these names might be, and often were, used in place of the single phonoglyphs. If, then, a phonoglyph belonging to the alphabet be followed by the expletive character which appertains to it, that expletive *may be*, and, for the most part, *should be, altogether neglected*." It was added, that the single characters were occasionally, though not frequently, used for their names, and the name "Ptulmius" occurring so frequently on monuments of the

Greek age, was given as an example ; the *two feathers* in this word representing, not, as has been heretofore supposed, an I singly, but IU, the name of that letter ; while, on the other hand, in the name “ Philipus,” the name IU is twice written for the single vowel I.

In order to establish this principle, it was first shewn that it was adopted in transcribing foreign words, when written in Egyptian characters, in the papyri published in fac-simile by the Trustees of the British Museum, and mostly dated in the reign of Rameses the Great, and his grandson. A number of such transcripts were produced. Some of them were shewn not to represent the words that corresponded to them, which were preserved in Hebrew characters in the Old Testament, unless a quantity of, apparently, superfluous characters were removed ; such were Ma-ru-ka-bu-ta for both singular and plural of the name of a chariot, Mirkéveth ; I-u-ma for Yam, a sea ; and Pu-ha-ru-ta for Phrat, the river Euphrates. Others were shewn to be written at times with those, apparently, superfluous characters, and at other times without them, as Astaruta and Astart, the name of the Syrian goddess ; K-sh, Kash and Kshi, varieties of the name of a country which we know was Kush, the supplied vowel being *u* and not *a*. It was observed, as an essential point in the proof, that the vowel which was introduced in this seemingly unnecessary manner, was always the same after each letter ; some letters, however, take for their expletives ideographic signs, which determine their pronunciation, and are thus equivalent to vowels. It was remarked that the letter may, in such cases, have for its expletive either the ideographic character, or the letter which it suggests or implies. This is an apparent but not a real exception to the law proposed.

It was shewn, secondly, that this principle was not confined to foreign words, though applied to them more systematically ; but that several pure Egyptian words were written with superfluous characters. In order to meet the cavils which it was anticipated would be raised against this position,

it was necessary to bring forward words, in which the alleged expletive could not be pretended to be properly a part of the word, there being no room for it either in the place where it was found, nor in any other part of the word, to which, according to the pretended law of transposition of vowels, it might be removed. Such were the instances of Ru-u-i-ha, for Ruha, "evening," the Coptic Ruhe; and Aahu, for Aah, "the moon," which the Greeks have transcribed by the single vowel A. Instances were also adduced, in which an ideographic character, or a consonant, appeared as an expletive in a pure Egyptian word; and also, an instance of two homophonous letters, which took different expletives, being interchanged, namely Tu and Ta, as formatives of the past participle, both of which, it was affirmed, should be read without the final vowel.

The principle having been thus established in the age of the papyri, it was shewn, in the third place, that it was not confined to that age, but was recognised in the time of the twelfth dynasty, and even previously thereto. This was shewn by a collation of texts, which were repeated in different steles, or in different parts of the same slab. It was shewn, in a variety of instances, that the same word was written sometimes with, and sometimes without, a vowel; which vowel was, according to the practice of the age of the papyri, the known expletive of the preceding consonant. It was argued that, if a vowel so circumstanced should be rejected as an expletive in the age of the papyri, it should be so also in the early ages to which the monuments now under consideration belonged.

In order to explain the origin of this practice, it was affirmed that all the Egyptian phonoglyphs originally represented syllables; and that, when a limited number of them was selected to represent the initial sounds in the respective syllables, they still retained their old names, as the sounds now appropriated to them could not be uttered alone. The

five different modes used for completing the syllabic characters, by the addition of letters, were briefly explained ; and it was then stated, that the old syllabic powers or names of the letters of the alphabet, were completed by the addition of another alphabetic character, representing the final sound in the syllable. This additional character is the expletive of the letter, and for it, as has been already noticed, an ideagraph, determining the pronunciation of the syllable, and thus equivalent to the first letter, may be obtained.

The reason why the practice of using expletives was retained, especially in foreign words, was the readiness with which some letters were confounded in the Hieratic texts. These letters had always different expletives, and a distinction was thus established between them, which would not exist if the expletives were omitted. The hieroglyphic texts in which expletives are chiefly found, were stated to be those which were copied from Hieratic, or, as they are called here, hieroglyphic originals.

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Mr. Huband Smith read a paper descriptive of an ancient Wayside Cross, situate in the townland of Nevinstown, on the northern bank of the river Blackwater, about two miles from the town of Navan, in the county of Meath. One side bears an inscription ; the opposite has a shield, with armorial bearings, *party per pale*, nearly effaced. Beneath the dexter side are the initial letters M. C., and, under the sinister, M. D. The height of the shaft is at present three feet six inches above the slab, in which a socket is cut to receive the tenon upon the lower end of the shaft. This slab stands on a low grassy hillock, the remains, doubtless, of an ascent of three or four stone steps, which, when complete, the cross surmounted.

Mr. Smith exhibited to the Academy a "rubbing," taken from the shaft, which shewed the present state of the inscription on the front, the shield on the back, and an ornamental pattern on each of the sides. He also produced a restoration